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gives in *Nature* an account of the report of the committee, which is of interest in this country as well as in England.

Sulphuric acid is indispensable for warfare and the enormous amount needed in the manufacture of explosives and for other purposes has led to an extraordinary development of the industry in England. Concentrating plants on a large scale have been everywhere erected, and the productive power of the country has reached an amount greatly in excess of the pre-war consumption. The problem of the committee is how this extension can be dealt with in view of the requirements when the war is ended.

According to Professor Thorpe there is one new source of sulphuric acid in England, created by the war, which should be maintained and extended, and that is the production of acid from Australian zinc concentrates. The manufacture of zinc was instituted in England before it was started in Belgium and Germany, but it has not been developed there to the same extent. Although London is the chief zinc market in Europe, the main production of the metal has been in the hands of Germans, who have also acquired a controlling interest in the Belgian concerns. It is said that Germany, with the view of maintaining her practical monopoly in the production and distribution of zinc, gained control of the rich deposits of zinc ores in Australia, and that the great bulk of the Australian concentrates found their way to Belgium and Silesia, mainly by way of Antwerp and Hamburg, Germany's own deposits being meanwhile conserved.

There is one outlet for sulphuric acid which is capable of far greater development, and that is in the manufacture of fertilizers, and especially of superphosphates. There can be no doubt that the food shortage in England has had a profound effect on agricultural policy, and will lead to a permanent increase in home production. This will necessitate a greatly increased demand for fertilizers, such as sulphate of ammonia, as well as of phosphatic manures. Much ammonia is at present absorbed in the production of nitrate of ammonia, which is needed in the manufacture of munitions. But this ammonia will be liberated after the war, and will be largely converted into sulphate for agricultural use. In the past about 60 per cent. of the sulphuric acid produced in England was absorbed in the manufacture of fertilizers, in which there was a considerable export trade, in addition to the home demands. The changed carrying conditions caused by the war may, it is said, lead to an extension of this export trade, induced, on one hand, by the comparative abundance of cheap sulphuric acid, and, on the other, by the greatly increased demand for fertilizers.

THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE

THE annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and of the national scientific societies affiliated with it will be held at Baltimore, from December 27 to December 31. Boston had been selected as the place of meeting this year, action recommending that the meeting be held in that city having been taken at the meeting in New York City two years ago. In view, however, of war conditions and of the large number of scientific men now working at Washington, it seemed desirable to select a place to which the amount of traveling would be reduced as much as possible, and where a meeting concerned with problems of national defense and national welfare could be held to best advantage. The situation was carefully considered at the meeting of the committee on policy held in Washington on April 22, and it was decided that it would be desirable to meet in Baltimore. President Goodnow and the professors of the scientific departments of the Johns Hopkins University having cordially welcomed the plan, it has been definitely decided that the meeting will be held in that city. A committee consisting of Dr. L. O. Howard, the permanent secretary, Dr. W. J. Humphreys and Professor J. C. Merriam has been appointed to report on a general plan for a program that will make the meeting of the greatest possible service to the nation.

The committee on grants of the American Association has made the following appropriations:

$300, to Mr. William Tyler Olcott, secretary, American Association of Variable Star Observers, 62 Church Street, Norwich, Connecticut, for the purchase of a telescope of 5-inch aperture.

$250, to Professor A. E. Douglass, of the University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona, for the length of record of tree growth of the Sequoias from about 2,200 to 3,000 years.

$500, to Professor Carl H. Eigenmann, of Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, for the study of the fresh-water fishes of South America.

$500, to Professor Edwin B. Frost, of Yerkes Observatory, Williams Bay, Wisconsin, for measurement and reduction of photographs of stellar spectra, already taken with the 40-inch telescope.

$200, to Dr. R. A. Porter, of the University of Syracuse, Syracuse, New York, for explanation of the hysteresis which has been observed in the potential gradients of the calcium-cathode vacuum tube.

$200, to Professor E. W. Sinnott, of The Connecticut Agricultural College, Storrs, Connecticut, for experiments to determine the ratio (in dry weight) between root, stem, leaf and fruit in the bean plant.

$500, to Professor O. F. Stafford, of the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, for research on the distillation of wood.

$200, to Professor Herman L. Fairchild, University of Rochester, Rochester, New York, for the continuation and completion of his studies on the Post-Glacial continental uplift in New England and the Maritime provinces of Canada.

$250, to Professor S. D. Townley, secretary, Seismological Society of America, Stanford University, California, for the investigation of earthquake phenomena.

SCIENTIFIC ITEMS

WE record with regret the death of Ewald Hering, the eminent physiologist, professor at Leipzig; of Dr. Ferdinand Braun, the German physicist who shared the Nobel Prize in 1905 with Guglielmo Marconi, for work in wireless telegraphy; of H. J. Helm, chemist of the British Government Laboratory, and of G. Meslin, director of the physical laboratory of the University of Montpellier.

DIRECTOR WILLIAM WALLACE CAMPBELL, of the Lick Observatory, University of California, has been elected a foreign member of the Royal Society.—The Geological Society of France has awarded to Dr. Henry Fairfield Osborn, president of the American Museum of Natural History, the Gaudry Medal, which was established by the society in the wear 1910 in honor of the distinguished French paleontologist, Albert Gaudry.—The Boston Society of Natural History has awarded the Walker Grand Honorary Prize, in the shape of a one-thousand-dollar Liberty bond, to Professor Jacques Loeb, of the Rockefeller Institute, New York, in recognition of his many published works covering a wide range of inquiry into the basic concepts of natural history.